Hands On®
The Newsletter of the American Massage Therapy Association
March/April 2005

AMTA To Launch Volunteer Center

AMTA plans to launch the Volunteer Center on its Web site later this year. The center will better serve AMTA members looking for volunteer opportunities by including a volunteer database. Members will be able to fill out an online application for volunteering and to search available volunteer opportunities at the chapter and national levels. The database will enable AMTA to better match volunteers with their stated interests, experience and available time commitments.

AMTA will launch a Volunteer Center this spring. Members will be able to search for volunteer opportunities in their area.

AMTA is unique in that volunteers are an important part of the associatioin's culture. The association encourages all members to volunteer in some way in order to experience the full benefit of AMTA membership. Volunteering provides opportunities for personal and professional growth, networking opportunities, a chance to have an impact on your profession and, most importantly, *fun*.

Watch for an E-mail soon that notifies you of the Volunteer Center's debut. If you have any questions, please contact Monica Love, volunteer development program manager, at *mlove@amtamassage.org* or 847-905-1415.

COS Annual Meeting Sees High Attendance

There were an estimated 117 attendees on hand January 20–22, in Newport Beach, California, to enjoy the California sun and to discuss the future of massage therapy education at this year's Council of Schools (COS) Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting.

Based on member feedback, a panel discussion—with representation from COMTA, NCB, Massage Therapy Foundation and AMTA—was held at the COS meeting.

"Participants had numerous questions, and we wanted to provide a forum to have the questions answered," says Winona Bontrager (PA) COS president.

Council of Schools members mingle at the Saturday Dinner Dance. An estimated 117 attendees turned out for the three-day conference.

The CORE Institute's George Kousaleos (FL) gave the keynote address, entitled, "One Common Goal: Excellence in Massage Therapy Education." The speech explored such issues as how school members can combine their individual strengths and knowledge to face future challenges.

First-time attendee Graham Rae (FL), massage program director of the Manatee Technical Institute-East Campus in Bradenton, Florida, says he was pleased with his first experience. "The meeting was a very stimulating event for me," Rae says. "Being involved in a new program at a larger institution had me getting stuck in minutiae. Hearing the COS history, meeting people from a variety of educational settings opened my mind.

> "My experience showed me the variety of opinions and clarified the challenge—defining and agreeing on common goals."
>
> *– Graham Rae, Massage Program Director Manatee Technical Institute–East Campus*

Panelists answered member's questions for three hours on January 19. Items that were on the members' minds were the U.S. Department of Education recognition of other agencies accrediting massage therapy, the concern of diverse education standards in the industry and the need for formalized communication between the organizations on the panel.

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Membership in AMTA is open to all qualified individuals regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, age, marital status, religion, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

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(Effective March 1, 2005)

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President's Letter

Monitoring Change

The only thing in life that is constant is change. While some view change as challenging, it is ultimately what moves us forward in life. Individually, it moves us personally and professionally. In AMTA, it moves us strategically and operationally for the good of our members and the massage therapy profession.

The AMTA volunteer and staff leadership team remains mindful of the rich history of the association, while continuing to manage multiple changing environments in our profession. AMTA's 501(c)6 nonprofit status requires our team to focus on serving our members and the profession. The team must concentrate its efforts at a level that continually monitors changes in both arenas, while being aware of how one affects the other. In order to do this, the AMTA Board of Directors consciously chose to work more strategically, while continuing to develop a partnership with the staff, which is responsible for the operations of the association under the direction of the executive director. The ability to rely on staff for the operational management of the association allows the board to address what is most important now, and in the future, for members and the profession.

Additionally, by working more strategically, the board is able to manage change and focus on members' needs within the high-speed, high-tech environment in which we currently live. One of the tools the board is using is knowledge-based decision making, which couples member survey information with opinion and experience to make good business decisions for the association. As a part of this process, we are now able to quickly gain survey information from members on different topics so we can continue to serve the membership and the association in the best way possible. This is very exciting!

So, my questions for you are as follows: As an individual, do you embrace change? And, as a professional massage therapist and an AMTA member, will you champion the changes in the way your team is working for you and the profession?

Make today your best!

Mary Beth Braun

Mary Beth Braun
AMTA President

Girard Elected As Next AMTA President-Elect

The results of last fall's elections are now official—Jeanne Girard (CO) has been elected to the position of AMTA president-elect. She will serve in that position from March 1, 2005 until March 1, 2006, when she will assume the position of national president. Claude Gagnon (WI) was elected to the one open position of vice president and will serve a two-year term beginning March 1, 2005.

Judy Boyer (AZ) was elected to the AMTA National Board of Directors as a member-at-large to fill an expiring term, while Terry Hirth-Caldwell (MI), William Greenberg (CT) and Charna Rosenholtz (CO) were reelected as members-at-large. All will serve two-year terms beginning this March.

Lisa A. Schad (NJ), Kathleen Crewdson (CT), Todd Simmons (MI) and William [Lou] Castleman (TX) were elected to the 2005 Commission on Candidacy and will coordinate the candidate search for the 2005 election.

A total of 3,852 valid ballots were received for the officer and national board election—12.4 percent of AMTA's Professional members. This percentage is on par with the percentage of members who vote in other professional association elections.

Jeanne Girard will become AMTA president on March 1, 2006.

Call For Candidates

AMTA is looking for members to volunteer for its National Board of Directors. To request a candidate application packet, contact Gail Friedman at gfriedman@amtamassage.org. Or, you can request information by writing to:

2005 Commission on Candidacy
AMTA
500 Davis St., Suite 900
Evanston, Illinois 60201-4695

COS Meeting

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My experience showed me the variety of opinions and clarified the challenge—defining and agreeing on common goals."

When attendees weren't earning CE hours at classes—such as "Branding, Marketing and Lead Management for Massage Schools;" "Practical Strategic Planning for School Owners and Directors;" and "Orthopedic Assessment: Enhancing Students' Critical Thinking Skills"—they had 29 exhibits to explore. Discussion groups also were held to network and strategize ways to find and maintain qualified instructors and ways to track students after graduation.

COS President Winona Bontrager welcomes attendees to the annual meeting.

The COS Teachers Conference will be August 11–14 in Secaucus, New Jersey. Visit www.amtamassage.org for more details!

Sarbanes-Oxley Act Influences AMTA Policies

As a result of corporate financial scandals, in 2002 Congress passed the American Corporate Accountability Act, or the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX). It was meant to force public corporations to develop ethical standards that would make them accountable to their stockholders and the public. The law covers such things as a code of conduct for a board of directors, using a financial expert on the board to advise about risks, and auditing standards.

AMTA is a nonprofit corporation. It is not a public corporation. But some states are pushing for the SOX law to apply to associations and charities.

AMTA's Board of Directors wants the association to be well ahead on issues related to SOX, and has begun clarifying several procedures to ensure that they would meet the provisions of such a law applied to nonprofit corporations in the future.

For AMTA, these are issues of responsible governance, fiscal integrity and accountability to members. Because of the way AMTA is structured, these standards apply both to the national board and to chapter boards.

In the last year AMTA's national board took several actions in keeping with Sarbanes-Oxley provisions. Those decisions include the following:

- Issuing detailed quarterly investment updates to the finance committee.
- Issuing quarterly financial statements to the AMTA Board of Directors and AMTA staff directors with written narrative describing variances, etc.
- Annual distribution of copies of the AMTA 990 tax return to the board.
- Annual discussion with the board on internal financial controls (this will be done at each March board meeting).
- Require the executive director and director of finance and administration to certify annual financial statements to the board (end of each fiscal year).
- Establishment of an audit committee, which may begin work as soon as FY 05/06.
- All board members must sign disclosure forms agreeing to reveal any potential conflicts of interest.
- Establishment of an association-wide document retention policy.
- In June 2004, the board voted to implement a series of financial controls and guidelines for chapters. These will protect the money members pay in dues and ensure that all chapter finances are handled well. The decision also protects the

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Massage CPT Code Update

AMTA's Special Committee on Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes will be developing an action plan to meet criteria to submit a revised recommendation to the American Medical Association's Healthcare Professionals Advisory Committee (AMA HCPAC) on CPT codes specific to massage therapy.

The AMTA has withdrawn its first proposal, submitted in December 2004, because the AMA HCPAC felt the proposal did not demonstrate that the clinical efficacy of the service/procedure had been well documented.

This recommendation is in keeping with the recent Institute of Medicine (IOM) analysis, "Report on CAM Use in the United States," released on January 12, 2005. The IOM report speaks to a set of principles that apply not only to CAM but to all research. The report has elevated the discussion of CAM beyond the advocacy and skepticism that has long hampered the evolution of CAM science.

The conclusion that CAM research should be held to the same rigorous standards as conventional medicine will further the scientific investigation of this new field, increase its legitimacy as a research area and ultimately improve the public health. Specifically, the IOM concluded that:

"The committee recommends that the same principles and standards of evidence of treatment effectiveness apply to all treatments, whether currently labeled as conventional medicine or CAM. Implementing this recommendation requires that investigators use and develop as necessary, common methods, measures, and standards for the generation and interpretation of evidence necessary for making decisions about the use of CAM and conventional therapies."

AMTA will continue its process of working for CPT codes for massage therapy, knowing that it will take time and patience to negotiate everything needed to develop a positive result for massage therapists.

SOX Act

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national board and staff who are legally responsible and accountable for funds held by chapters. The provisions of that decision are being implemented now.

For AMTA, complying with any new laws that result from the SOX Act is an expression of AMTA's committment to members and to ethical policies.

fingerprints

Taking Orthopedic Massage To Kabele, Uganda

When H. D'jango Sanders (TX) heard the Lions Club International was forming a team of medical personnel to travel to Uganda to help with health-care projects, he was eager to offer his skills as a massage therapist. Once given the green light to join the team, he prepared to present a five-day class on orthopedic massage at the Rugarama health clinic in Kabale, Uganda.

Sanders teaches orthopedic massage to students in Kabele, Uganda.

Sanders says soft tissue problems often take a back seat to more pressing medical emergencies in developing countries. However, soft tissue injuries can present widespread problems. "A comprehensive class in orthopedic massage would provide the technical skills to allow a thorough treatment of soft tissue injuries that impact not just individuals, but families and communities," Sanders says. "A worker who is unable to work due to a soft tissue injury affects many people."

The class didn't run smoothly at first, as language and cultural barriers presented early roadblocks. The students—made up of roughly 20 people, including physicians, physician assistants and nurses—were difficult to coax out of their shells. On the first day, he didn't have a single inquiry from anyone, and when it came time for demonstration time, nobody volunteered.

But by the end of the workshop, the participants opened up and willingly volunteered for hands-on demonstrations. The class was more relaxed, and students had no problems asking questions.

In fact, the class was such a success that Sanders has been asked to run a similar program in Tanzania, if funding is available from outside sources.

"The enthusiasm, laughter and complete attendance and participation were the highlight of the Rugarama Clinic," says Sanders. "I do believe I learned as much from the class as they did from me. It was an excellent exchange."

For more information about future opportunities such as this, contact D'jango Sanders at 361-882-6800, or *django@djangosanders.com*.

Massage Therapist Appointed Chair Of Aquatic Therapy Program

Douglas Kinnaird (OR) has been appointed chair of the International Conference for Aquatic Therapy and Rehabilitation Certifications (ICATRIC).

ICATRIC takes a multi-disciplinary approach to aquatic therapy and rehabilitation, while respecting the skills and talents of the health-care professionals involved.

In 1990, Kinnaird began working in the therapy pool program at Mittleman Jewish Community Center in Portland, Oregon, which is one of the oldest in the nation. At the time, he had already been a therapist for 14 years. "The more I learned, the more my practice moved to the water, and now that's where I do almost all of my work," Kinnaird says.

Kinnaird demonstrates how massage therapy works in aquatic therapy.

He likens the water to a three-dimensional massage table. "Access to the body is unlimited, and stretching and strengthening exercises are virtually effortless," Kinnaird says. "Gravity and furniture don't restrict range of motion. The warm water and hydrostatic pressure also help reduce pain."

In 2000, the Aquatic Therapy and Rehab Institute honored Kinnaird with an award for being one of the first to bring massage therapy into the aquatic therapy domain. Since then, several other massage therapists have joined the program.

"As a member of the massage profession, I feel honored to be a part of this process," Kinnaird says.

quick tips!

Working With Insurance And Medical Referrals

Many therapists express the desire to work with physician referrals and to accept insurance for reimbursement. This can be a very rewarding adventure in many ways. However, it can also be complicated and disappointing when done haphazardly. Following are some tips to help make the process less annoying, and to prevent money losses for you.

- Like any adventure, it is imperative to be prepared in advance. Working with doctor referrals and insurance is no different. You need to obtain reliable, ethical training and preparation on the subject of insurance billing. Working with insurance is to work in the medical and legal arena. There are many issues involved other than just submitting a claim and waiting for reimbursement.
- Be sure you have patient files with the proper forms set up in advance so that when a patient walks in the door you can pull a file that identifies the type of insurance case you have before you.
- When you are just beginning, be willing to set aside a select number of hours a week to do telephone and paperwork, or trade a friend or family member massages for telephone time.
- Know upfront that there are no cut and dry rules. There's no way one can provide a list of insurance companies that will reimburse a massage therapist directly. It goes more by type of cases, not insurance company.
- Being fair and ethical with our fees is what will insure we remain able to be reimbursed and accepted by the insurance industry. Insurance companies look at the bottom line.

Reprinted with permission from Vivian Madison-Mahoney's Insurance & Practice Building Manual, "Manipulate Your Future."

WEB BYTES

Understanding Web Scams—If It's Too Good To Be True, It Probably Is

The Internet has become a boon to businesses worldwide. Unfortunately, many scam artists are taking advantage of this medium and using it to take money from unsuspecting viewers. According to the National Consumers League (a watchdog group in Washington, D.C.), scams, cheats and rip-offs on the Internet cost an average of $803 per incident from January 2004 through June 2004.

Like our readers, AMTA receives E-mails and phone calls from scam artists trying to sell their products and services via the Internet. Many of these online scammers are designed to look like a real business, which allows them to attract orders from individuals and companies. The people running these services also act quickly; in fact, they usually operate from servers outside the United States, which allows them to operate quickly and go out of business soon afterward—before anyone can catch up with them.

According to the National Consumers League, scams, cheats and rip-offs on the Internet cost each consumer an average of $803 from January 2004 through June 2004.

Caveat emptor (buyer beware) still rings true today because of the multitude of Internet scam artists out there trying to make a quick buck. *Always* make sure you know the company or service with which you are dealing.

AMTA staff receives complaints from members about many seminars, workshops and other offers, but unfortunately, there is nothing we can do to help you get your money back. But, you can write to the Better Business Bureau and chamber of commerce in the city where the company is located. That might help prevent others from being scammed.

Internet Fraud Statistics

January–June 2004 (Average Loss: $803)

Top 10 Frauds	
Online Auctions *	28%
General Merchandise	19%
Nigerian Money Offers	9%
Phishing	5%
Information/Adult Services	3%
Lotteries/Lottery Clubs	2%
Fake Check Scams	2%
Computer Equipment/Software	1%
Fake Escrow Services	1%
Internet Access Services	1%

For more information on current scams and fraud over the Internet, logon to: www.fraud.org or call 1-800-876-7060. You can report a suspected Internet fraud and learn about the latest scams.

Source: National Internet Fraud Watch Information Center

** In the fall of 2003, eBay removed the link from its Web site to the National Consumers League's fraud center. As a result, the number of auction complaints reported to NCL has dropped to one-sixth of the previous level. Based on statistics prior to eBay's action, NCL estimates that the fraud center would have received 18,660 auction complaints during the January 1-June 30, 2004 time period. The total number of Internet fraud complaints would have been approximately 24,505, with auctions representing 76 percent.*

AMTA Locator Service Boasts Record Numbers

AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist® national locator service has more users than ever before! In January 2005, there were a total of 32,104 inquiries compared to 11,618 in January 2004. In fact, annual inquiries are 136 percent higher than the same period last year—262,407 vs. 111,374.

The locator service is an effective way to attract potential clients to your practice. For AMTA Professional members, the service is free. But you must sign up to take advantage of it.

AMTA's media relations drive the response—they actively put the locator service in front of consumers through print and broadcast media, and promote it among health-care providers. The goal is to promote both massage and AMTA members among all audiences that might choose or influence a choice of a massage therapist—that means audiences from travelers, to those going to a spa, to those who might discuss massage with their doctors.

If you are a Professional member and want to be listed in he locator service, you can enter your information through the "Member Section" of the Web site [www.amtamassage.org], or call Member Services at 877-905-2700.

MASSAGE THERAPY FOUNDATION

Massage Therapy Foundation To Host Research Conference

The Massage Therapy Foundation will present "Highlighting Massage Therapy in CAM Research," a three-day conference that will immediately following the AMTA National Convention this September in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This conference will bring together researchers, massage therapists and massage therapy educators for presentations about massage therapy research, panel discussions, poster sessions and networking. It will be the first of its kind in the United States for the massage profession.

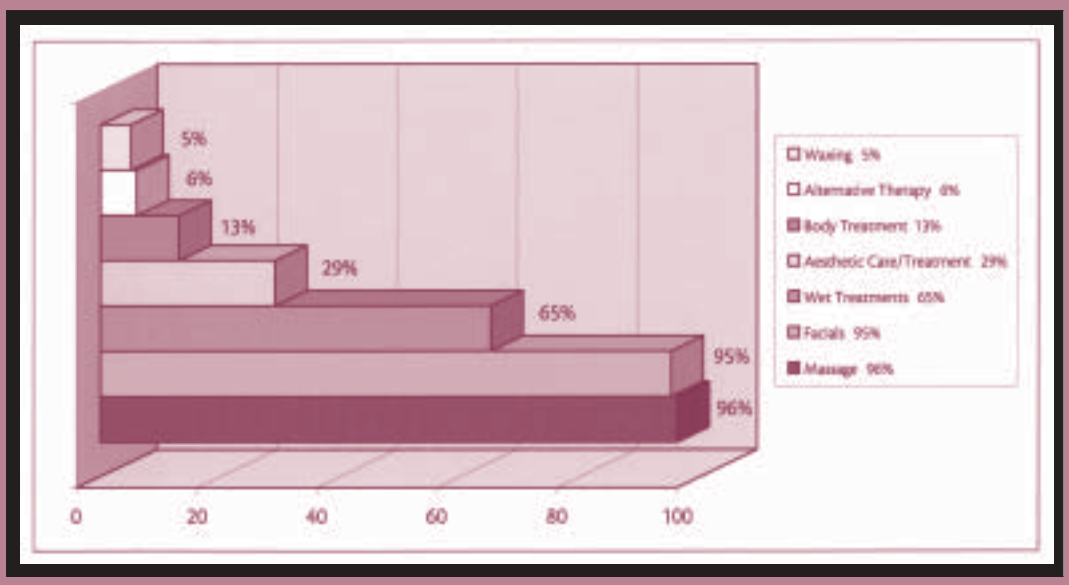
Research sessions will be tailored to therapists, researchers and educators, and will provide educational opportunities for participants of all knowledge levels.

One of the key ingredients of an enduring profession is its ongoing exploration into which elements of the work are helpful, when they are helpful and which elements, if any, may prove less effective. The foundation staff hopes you will join them to explore these issues at this landmark event!

Registration will be available in April. For more information, go to www.massagetherapyfoundation.org, or call 847-905-1667.

After the conference, attendees may want to take advantage of New Mexico's many scenic wonders.

Massage Tops Treatments Offered At Spas



Source: ISPA

Massage was the treatment of choice at spas, according to the "International Spa Association's (ISPA) 2004 Industry Study," which was released in November 2004. Some 96 percent of spa owners said they offered massage—the highest of any category. A total of 970 spa owners and managers were interviewed to collect data regarding the latest trends in this $11.2 billion a year industry.

CALENDAR

2005

MARCH 31–APRIL 3
AMTA New England Regional Conference
Boxborough, Massachusetts
Contact: 401-233-8108

JUNE 11
AMTA Board Of Directors Meeting
San Diego, California
Contact: 847-905-1657

JULY 7–10
Chapter Volunteer Orientation Program
Evanston, Illinois
Contact: 847-905-1428

JULY 13
AMTA Board Of Directors Conference Call
Contact: 847-905-1657

AUGUST 11–14
AMTA COS Teachers Conference
Secaucus, New Jersey
Contact: 847-905-1643

SEPTEMBER 21–24
AMTA 2005 National Convention
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Contact: 847-905-1643

SEPTEMBER 25–27
Highlighting Massage Therapy In CAM Research
Massage Therapy Foundation
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Contact: 847-905-1667

Education

Soar To New Heights At AMTA's 2005 National Convention

Reach your potential in Albuquerque, New Mexico! Register now for the AMTA 2005 National Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on September 21–24 at the Albuquerque Convention Center. AMTA members can save $80 by taking advantage of the special early registration rate.

AMTA's National Convention will run September 21-24 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Members can save $80 by registering early.

This year's convention has a great lineup of presenters, with additional classes offered so you can earn up to 19 continuing education (CE) hours (up from last year's 15 CE hours!), to help you grow and expand your knowledge of a growing industry. It promises to be an intense personal and professional experience with top-notch speakers, unsurpassed networking and an ever-expanding exhibits marketplace.

Featured this year is a 16-hour course by Erik Dalton, entitled, "Sensory Receptors...Rebels Without a Pause!" It's the first time AMTA has offered a 16-hour course. Additional highlights include "Seated Myofascial Techniques for Head & Neck Pain," with Robert King (IL); "Herbal Tonic Therapy for Chronic Stress," with Mitch Coven (NM); and "Pain Management & Self-Care," with Cynthia Wheeler (IL). Register early to reserve your seat; these classes sell out fast!

You also don't want to miss keynote speaker, Brian Tracy, on September 22. Tracy is the world-wide best-selling author of more than 30 books and 300 audio/video learning programs, including *The Psychology of Achievement*, *Breaking the Success Barrier* and the book, *Create Your Own Future*.

For more information, call 877-905-2700, ext. 143, or register online at www.amtamassage.org.

Save The Date For Next COS Conference!

Plan now for the upcoming AMTA Council of Schools 2005 Teachers Conference. This year's conference, "Motivate Yourself: Enliven Your Classroom," will be held in Secaucus, New Jersey, from August 11-14. You can register at www.amtamassage.org, or by calling 877-905-2700, ext. 143, and asking to receive a free brochure when it becomes available.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

May 2, 2005 — *Jul./Aug. 2005 Issue*
July 1, 2005 — *Sept./Oct. 2005 Issue*

Hands On welcomes contributions from all AMTA members. All submissions must include a legible signature and phone number, and may be edited for space and clarification. *Hands On* does not accept advertisements. Address all correspondence to:

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